

# homefront

Wisconsin Homeland Security Newsletter

Spring/Summer 2006

## Keeping Wisconsin safe is a top priority

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As we present the second edition of *Homefront*, Wisconsin's homeland security newsletter, we remain pleased that Wisconsin is one of the safest states in the country. We have the best of the best in this state working toward keeping our citizens safe from disasters, whether they be terrorist attacks or natural disasters. These men and women take their jobs seriously and are always finding new and better ways to make sure we prevent disasters when possible, and are always prepared to react should tragedy strike. Even as federal homeland security funds continue to decline, Wisconsin remains at the forefront of public safety. Keeping our emergency first responders well-equipped and trained is one of my top priorities.

In 2006, we are continuing to implement important initiatives from past years, including supplying local emergency first responders with state-of-the-art protection and detection equipment, and improving public safety radio interoperability and the way justice professionals share important information. In addition to these initiatives, public safety professionals are working with citizens of the state to keep our communities safe. When it comes to safety of our neighborhoods, we must be vigilant and make any and all necessary improvements. As Governor, I am dedicated to ensuring local units of government have the resources they need to continually find ways to improve public safety.

It is more important than ever that you, the citizens of Wisconsin, do your part to keep



**At the Wisconsin Summit on Pandemic Influenza held on March 15, Governor Doyle announced two new members to the Governor's Homeland Security Council. Joining the council are Amy Smith of the Department of Natural Resources and Judy Ziewacz of the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection.**

our state safe. Take an active role in your communities and work with law enforcement, fire departments, and Emergency Medical Services whenever possible. Your partnership with these agencies is critical to not only preventing tragedy, but to making sure our fellow citizens are well cared-for in times of need.

In this newsletter you will learn more about what is being done in the homeland security area to keep Wisconsin safe. Thank you for your support. ■



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# From the Chair

Words can hardly capture the challenges and opportunities we have experienced since *Homefront's* first issue in early September 2005. From hurricane response to preparing for bird flu, our emergency responders have continuously focused on safeguarding our citizens.

When the first edition of *Homefront* went to press, the hurricane season was in full swing. Hurricanes Katrina, Rita and Wilma slammed into the Gulf Coast in quick succession. Governor Doyle ordered a historic mobilization of some 450 Wisconsin National Guard members to provide search, rescue and recovery for citizens of Louisiana and Mississippi. This unprecedented activation for disaster relief outside our state's borders lasted several weeks and helped thousands of citizens in desperate need.

At the same time, the State Emergency Operations Center in Madison was activated. Wisconsin Emergency Management and the state's Department of Health and Family Services coordinated the reception of nearly 2,000 Gulf Coast families in Wisconsin. This included two FEMA charter flights that brought 170 evacuees and 26 pets to Milwaukee. As of February 1, we are still working with many of these families, providing long-term housing assistance.

In mid-September, mindful of problems in the Hurricane Katrina response, the governor directed a full review of Wisconsin's preparedness. The "Review of Wisconsin's Emergency Preparedness Plans" issued in early October provides an assessment of the state's ability to respond to and recover from a catastrophic disaster. This included the need to plan for mass evacuations, identify special needs populations and improve communications interoperability. This report was recognized as the first of its kind by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and has become the standard for other states.

Both during and shortly after the publication and delivery of this report, emergency management professionals and first responders from across the state reviewed their emergency plans. Their dedication to operational excellence was particularly impressive.



*Albert H. Wilkening*  
**Maj. Gen. Al Wilkening**  
Homeland Security Advisor

I am happy to report that Wisconsin is, on balance, in very good shape; but the goal remains to raise the bar to the next level of "All Hazards" preparedness.

Looking to the future, the worldwide potential for avian influenza (bird flu) outbreaks has prompted a review of Wisconsin's health preparedness plans. Although Wisconsin has an excellent health care system and comprehensive plans to deal with an outbreak of the deadly flu, Governor Doyle directed a timely Health Care Facilities Stakeholders Summit, which was held Jan. 18. This summit provided an excellent forum for local and state health care leaders to learn what plans are in place, share information of mutual concern and build continuing health-care related partnerships in the future.

I have mentioned in the past that the business of Homeland Security in Wisconsin is a constant "Work-in-Progress." To that end, the Homeland Security Council, which I am privileged to chair, has conducted a gap analysis identifying new and better ways to conduct the vital business of Homeland Security in Wisconsin. The Council, in concert with other individuals and entities, will create new opportunities to enhance Homeland Security in Wisconsin in the months and years ahead.

We look forward to communicating our progress in this area in future issues of *Homefront*. ■



# New Joint Operations Center will provide emergency communication

Construction of the new Joint Force Headquarters–Wisconsin Joint Operations Center is scheduled for completion in March 2006. Located in the Department of Military Affairs 2400 Wright Street facility, the JOC will serve as the Wisconsin National Guard's primary communications and coordination node for day-to-day operations and its principal response center for crisis situations.

The JOC, sited immediately adjacent to Wisconsin Emergency Management's Emergency Operations Center, consists of 17 separate work stations

organized into pods to facilitate communication between like functions. The JOC itself is divided into an operations section, a communication section, and a policy room, each equipped with the latest in telecommunications and audio-visual equipment.

As the focal point of JFHQ-WI current operations, the JOC receives, distributes, analyzes, and synchronizes information; handles time-sensitive requests for assistance and information from Wisconsin Emergency Management, counties, municipalities, or other state agencies; monitors

JFHQ-WI participation in selected events; disseminates information and intelligence about Homeland Security and domestic operations; and serves as the Wisconsin National Guard's crisis response center.

During routine operations the JOC will be staffed with a 24/7/365 situation awareness cell. These soldiers and airmen will provide a central point of contact focused on current operations and items of interest to the Wisconsin National Guard. In emergencies, the routine staff will be augmented with soldiers and airmen

to plan and coordinate the Wisconsin National Guard's response and facilitate the use of state and federal military assets.

The new JOC is expected to become operational by late March 2006, and an exercise to test its capabilities is scheduled for April 2006.

For more information about the new Wisconsin National Guard Joint Operations Center, please contact Lt. Col. Peter Anderson at 608-242-3530, [peter.anderson@wi.ngb.army.mil](mailto:peter.anderson@wi.ngb.army.mil); or Lt. Jason Crabb at 608-242-532, [jason.crabb@wi.ngb.army.mil](mailto:jason.crabb@wi.ngb.army.mil). ■

## DATCP prepares for animal emergencies

Staff members from the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) continue to provide various levels of Incident Command System (ICS) training across the state. The training features exercise scenarios that focus on highly contagious animal diseases including avian influenza.

Mike Sampson, animal health emergency planner and lead ICS instructor for DATCP, said scenario-based training teaches participants to understand their roles in an emergency response and helps them relate to the use of ICS. For the Intermediate ICS course, training included group exercises on how to develop an incident action plan and a resource list for a response, and discussed how to transfer command.

"We used two scenarios featuring foot-and-mouth disease and avian influenza," said Sampson, "which gave participants the opportunity to identify similarities in response, despite the differences in diseases."

Sampson said DATCP has provided ICS training to nearly 350 participants representing various private and public agencies. Madison Area Technical College sponsored a Basic ICS course early in November that drew 33 participants. Later in

the month, Clark County Emergency Management sponsored a Basic ICS course; and in December, DATCP used Homeland Security grant funds to sponsor an Intermediate ICS course.



As part of the Intermediate Incident Command System class, participants broke into small groups to discuss response and recovery issues.

# Disaster exercise promotes both private and public partnerships



Wisconsin Emergency Management Training Coordinator Dan Wenborne led the emergency planning discussion during the exercise involving Northwestern Mutual Insurance and Milwaukee area governmental agencies.

Reports show that most businesses do not have an emergency plan, and it is estimated that 44 percent of companies that lose records in a disaster never resume business. That is why it is critical to encourage businesses to plan for emergencies as well as be involved in local private-public emergency management partnerships.

To help promote business involvement, a tabletop exercise was held Jan. 5 with representatives from Northwestern Mutual Insurance and officials with the City of Milwaukee and Milwaukee County. Training officers from Wisconsin Emergency Management facilitated the exercise. The exercise

scenario involved a radiological explosion at a Northwestern Mutual Insurance building. Discussion focused on disaster response and business recovery plans.

About 25 people participated in the exercise, part of the Urban Area Security Initiative. Participants said the tabletop helped them understand the needs of the private sector during disasters, and officials of the insurance company plan to continue to be involved in disaster planning. Milwaukee County Emergency Management Director Carl Stenbol said this was the first exercise conducted using a Homeland Security exercise evaluation format. ■

## Evacuation planning highlighted

### Governor Doyle calls for state health care summit

How prepared is Wisconsin to respond to a major health emergency, or to evacuate large numbers of special needs citizens?

These were among the questions raised at the Governor's Health Care Facilities Stakeholders Summit held Jan. 18 at the Mendota Conference Center in Madison. Over 60 representatives of public health services, hospitals, nursing homes, assisted living centers, fire services, EMS, emergency management, homeland security and volunteer agencies attended.

Maj. Gen. Al Wilkening, the Adjutant General; Dr. Sheri Johnson, Administrator and State Health Officer Division of Public Health WI; and Susan J. Reinardy, Deputy Secretary of Health and Family Services, welcomed attendees to the summit. Participants introduced themselves and shared lessons from Hurricane Katrina. Presenters covered topics on planning

scenarios, pandemic influenza, emergency management, hospital preparedness, and mass evacuation.

Governor Doyle called for the health care meeting after receiving the *Review of Wisconsin's Emergency Preparedness Plans*, a report compiled and issued in October 2005, after the Hurricane Katrina experience.

A section of the report focused on evacuation and emergency plans that involve nursing homes, hospitals and related health care facilities. In spite of Wisconsin's existing requirements for emergency planning, evacuation provisions and disaster drills, the report identified these areas as needing improvement.

At the end of the health care summit, attendees identified current gaps and next steps that need to be taken at the local and state levels. The summit was Webcast and can be viewed at this DHFS website: <http://dhfs.wisconsin.gov/katrina/governorssummit.htm>. ■



# Helping our citizens plan and prepare

Citizen Corps programs in Wisconsin continue to multiply and expand.

The 2005 federal grant funds have been awarded, and local programs are now in operation. There are currently 13 local Citizen Corps programs representing 19 Wisconsin counties. Some of these programs represent multi-county efforts.

2006 funds for local Citizen Corps programs will become available sometime in late summer, 2006. It appears that several new county-level programs will be eligible for these funds.

In addition, three affiliated programs are up and running:

The CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) training program continues to be very successful. The state Office of Justice Assistance currently manages and operates this program, with plans to transfer management and operations to the American Red Cross in the near future.

The WisTAP (Wisconsin Terrorism Awareness and Prevention) program will host its first train-the-trainer class this spring. The program is operated by a consortium of four agencies — the Winnebago County Sheriff's Department, the Wisconsin Crime Prevention Practitioners Association, Fox Valley Technical College and the Wisconsin Office of Justice Assistance. It targets law enforcement, fire service, public health, emergency management, and EMS personnel.

The READY (Responding to Emergencies and Disasters with Youth) initiative is on schedule to host four youth camps in the summer of 2006, one or two of which will be held at Volk Field. This initiative, aimed at middle and high school students, provides awareness and response training and education by means of an all-hazards scenario. ■



Participants attending the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training held in Ozaukee County in January learned how to use a fire extinguisher.

## Homeland Security Review

A comprehensive review of Wisconsin's homeland security capabilities and needs in preparation to apply for 2006 Homeland Security funds is underway. The review, led by the Office of Justice Assistance (OJA), will be used to develop a strategic plan that will define the initiatives necessary to achieve Wisconsin's homeland security goals. OJA has asked representatives from state and local agencies as well as the private sector and Tribal community to provide input in the process.

To help gather information, several planning groups will convene around the state to discuss national priorities that include communications interoperability, information sharing, medical surge capability, citizen preparedness and protection, and other topics. Each planning group will review strengths and weaknesses in the area and recommend initiatives as part of a draft plan that will be widely distributed to stakeholder groups for feedback.

The review and planning process will enable the state to build on previous planning efforts and develop a broad-based homeland security plan that will address Wisconsin's needs statewide. It is a unique opportunity to evaluate what we have accomplished, where we need to be in the future, and what we need to do to get there. ■

# Group works to ensure safe food supply in Wisconsin

Ensuring Wisconsin's food supply remains safe is the focus on a new working group represented by local, state and federal agencies.

The Wisconsin Agro-security Working Group held its first meeting in December. This was the first time representatives from such a wide variety of agencies had gathered to discuss the security of Wisconsin's agriculture and food system.

The working group will facilitate information and technology sharing

among public and private entities to bolster Wisconsin's agriculture and food security. Tom Thieding of the Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation and Wisconsin Agri-security Response Network stated, "This was a great opportunity for all the agencies to come to the same table to discuss agriculture security issues."

The agriculture industry is one of 14 sectors identified by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security as critical infrastructures. The FBI is concerned with the security of America's

agriculture and food system because it is an extensive, open, interconnected, and complex structure providing potential targets for terrorist attacks. A successful attack on the U.S. agriculture and food system could have catastrophic health and economic effects.

The agriculture industry in Wisconsin is vital to the state's economic well-being. Wisconsin agriculture generates more than \$51.5 billion in economic activity and provides nearly 420,000 jobs. ■



Dane County Sheriff's Department recently received a Bearcat armored rescue vehicle. The truck was purchased with federal homeland security grant funds and will be used for a variety of emergencies including citizen rescues.



Special Agent Brad Ruff of the Wisconsin Department of Justice, Division of Criminal Investigation, Narcotics Bureau presents a "Mini-Buster" density detection device to State Patrol Maj. Darren Price during a recent highway safety and security training session at the State Patrol Academy. With its density detection capabilities, the Mini-Buster can help find drugs, weapons or explosives, hidden in tires or other empty spaces in vehicles. The State Patrol received two Mini-Busters from the Division of Criminal Investigation to use in its highway criminal interdiction and homeland security efforts during traffic stops.



## School Preparedness Initiative

Wisconsin's Office of Justice Assistance (OJA) offered school preparedness conferences at five locations throughout Wisconsin in 2005. The conferences consisted of a keynote address and training presentations for school personnel and their public safety officials on the impact of terrorism on school safety and crisis preparedness planning.

Several hundred attendees, representing many of the school districts in Wisconsin, participated in the school preparedness conferences.

Many topics discussed in the conferences reinforced good crisis preparedness strategies that relate to terrorism but also belong in an all-hazards response plan. Other topics highlighted the unique problems posed by terrorist activities and how schools can incorporate balanced, commonsense risk-reduction measures into their existing plans.

The keynote address stressed the importance of proper planning and school preparedness. Those in attendance were given an overview of the National Incident Management System (NIMS), the importance of vulnerability assessments in school crisis planning, and how to test their school's response plan through exercising. Attendees were also told of the 2005 school preparedness grants being provided to assist schools in conducting assessments, updating their response plan and testing their plan through exercises.

The conferences emphasized that all Wisconsin schools should work closely with local, state, and federal health, safety, and emergency personnel to develop and maintain plans for coping with a variety of emergencies.

OJA is currently finalizing the 2006 school preparedness program which will build on the contents of last year's agenda. ■



# SIEC focuses on improving first responder communications

The Wisconsin State Interoperability Executive Council (SIEC) — created by Executive Order 87 — approaches its first birthday having made significant progress on a statewide communications interoperability plan. Council members from a wide variety of backgrounds have hammered out policies designed to ensure first responders can talk with one another in disasters and day-to-day operations.

Following the lead of the federal government, the SIEC has adopted

Project 25 as a baseline standard to improve connectedness between radio systems. Permanent and more encompassing technical standards will be approved by the council in the upcoming weeks.

While the technology of interoperability is important, the council recognizes that operating procedures and training for first responders are equally important. Technology is of no use if first responders aren't properly trained to

use it. Therefore, the SIEC has adopted the National Incident Management System as the principal operating procedure for emergencies. The council plans on developing complete operating procedures soon, based on models from other states.

A final statewide interoperability plan that will incorporate all of these elements is due by late March. More information on the SIEC is available at its website at [www.siec.wi.gov](http://www.siec.wi.gov). ■

## Regional group works to enhance emergency communications

When disaster strikes, communications equipment often goes down. To help ensure responders can continue communicating after the storm, members of the West Central Interoperability Alliance, a multi-jurisdictional team working on communications interoperability, have received a grant to provide much-needed equipment.

Governor Jim Doyle recently approved \$963,450.00 in federal grant dollars through the Office of Justice Assistance for the group to purchase interoperable radio equipment for regional communication purposes. This money will buy a series of equipment that will enhance communications. The counties involved in the project are Barron, Buffalo, Clark, Dunn, Eau Claire, Jackson, La Crosse, Pierce, Pepin, St Croix, Trempealeau and the Ho-Chunk Nation.

Elert and Associates will provide the engineering and project management support for the project. Some of the equipment purchased will bring counties up to speed with their neighbors. Clark, Dunn, Trempealeau and Pepin counties are all slated to receive MARC repeaters, which are emergency mutual aid channels that the rest of the counties in the region already have in use.

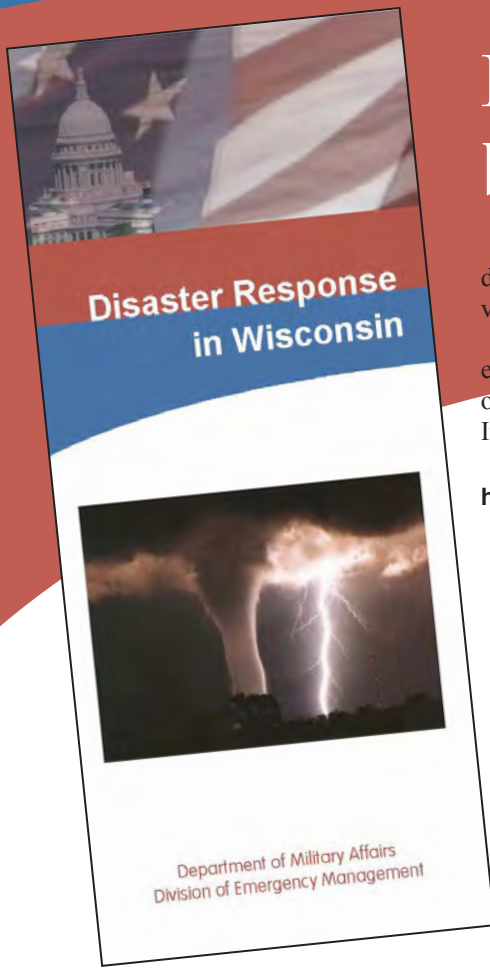
Other solutions are more innovative and cutting-edge. Additional communications equipment will link regional public safety dispatch centers together using Radio-over-IP technologies and Wisconsin's BadgerNet, a state-run collection of voice, video, and data networks. This will provide a "backup dispatch" capability for the 11 county dispatch centers.

The grant will also fund global reprogramming and a new regional repeater project. These enhancements will benefit all aspects of public safety – Sheriff, Police, Fire, EMS and local Emergency Management - throughout the region.

"The project provided a great way for us to work together as a team," says Keith Butler, Emergency Management Coordinator for La Crosse County. "All the agencies got together for a common good." ■



Wisconsin Emergency Management's Dawn Foss learns how to use the ACU 1000 located in the state's Mobile Command Center. The portable communications unit allows cross frequency communications from various agencies with radios.



# Disaster response brochure available

When should local governments ask for assistance during an emergency? Who can declare an emergency? What federal and state programs are available to help disaster victims?

These are just some of the questions that are answered in an easy to use brochure entitled, "Disaster Response in Wisconsin." The brochure developed by the Department of Military Affairs provides a chart with an overview of a disaster response in Wisconsin. In addition, emergency contact information is available.

The brochure is available at <http://emergencymanagement.wi.gov> and at <http://homelandsecurity.wi.gov>. ■

## The 39th Annual Governor's Conference on Emergency Management and Homeland Security

April 4-5, 2006

Grand Geneva Resort, Lake Geneva, WI

Registration information available at

<http://emergencymanagement.wi.gov>

or 608-242-3232

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